

Message Text

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45

ACTION NEA-12

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 EUR-25 EA-11 ADP-00 SR-02 ORM-03 AID-20

IGA-02 EB-11 FAA-00 COME-00 IO-13 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-07 H-02 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01

PRS-01 SS-15 USIA-12 RSR-01 /175 W

----- 044456

R 251620 ZSDUN 73

FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5174

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY KAMPALA

AMEMBASSY LONDON

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE NEW DELHI 7426

E. O. 11652: N/ A

TAGS: PFOR, IN, ETRN

SUBJECT: SIT- IN ON PANAM AIRCRAFT

REF: A) NEW DELHI 7381; B) NEW DELHI 7382

BEGIN SUMMARY: UGANDA ASIANS SITTING IN ON PAN AM PLANE
HAD PAID TRAVEL AGENT FOR TRIP TO LONDON. GOI DECISION
TO USE FORCE TO END SIT- IN SHOWED POLITICAL COURAGE AND WILLINGNESS
TO FACE UP TO INTERNATIONAL AIR SECURITY OBLIGATIONS. INTERNATIONAL
AIR CARRIERS SHOULD EXERCISE GREATER CARE IN DEALINGS WITH ASIAN UK
PASSPORT HOLDERS. END SUMMARY.

1. SEVERAL POINTS IN CONNECTION WITH SIT- IN BY 107 UGANDA ASIANS
ON PAN AM 747 AT DELHI AIRPORT JUNE 24 MAY BE OF INTEREST TO
ADDRESSEES.

2. UGANDANS PAID SHADY TRAVEL AGENT IN DELHI SUBSTANTIAL SUM,
REPORTEDLY RS. 6000 (\$800) EACH BEYOND DELHI- BANGKOK- DELHI
FARE, IN UNDERSTANDING THAT SUM WOULD COVER ULTIMATE DELIVERY
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TO LONDON. TRAVEL AGENT TOLD THEM THAT 1971 LAW AGAINST GOI FORC-
ING A FOREIGNER TO ENTER INDIA WOULD PREVENT THEIR BEING DIS-
EMBARKED AT DELHI. JUST BEFORE POLICE EJECTED SITTERS- IN, AND AS
RESULT NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN GOI AND UGANDANS,

TRAVEL AGENT WAS BROUGHT TO AIRFIELD AND PARADED BY POLICE BEFORE UGANDANS. GOI APPARENTLY EXTRACTED COMMITMENT FROM TRAVEL AGENT TO REFUND SOME OF TRAVELERS MONEY, BUT IN THE END THIS FAILED TO INDUCE UGANDANS TO ABANDON THEIR STRUGGLE. TRAVEL AGENT IN QUESTION IS REPUTED TO HAVE ARRANGED ILLEGAL PASSAGE OF A NUMBER OF UGANDANS TO BRITAIN.

3. UK CONSUL AND ASSISTANTS ON SCENE WERE VERY POLITE BUT FIRM IN RESISTING UGANDANS' DEMANDS FOR PREFERENTIAL IMMIGRATION TREATMENT IN RETURN FOR AGREEMENT TO GET OFF PLANE. UK CONSUL WAS SIMILARLY FIRM IN RESISTING GOI SUGGESTION THAT OFFER OF UK FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE TO SITTEES- IN MIGHT PERSUADE THEM TO DISEMBARK.

4. THROUGHOUT 17 HOUR SIT- IN, INDIAN OFFICIALS WERE HOPEFUL THAT UGANDANS COULD BE PERSUADED TO LEAVE PLANE OF THEIR OWN ACCORD. THIS HOPE INSPIRED BY COMPLEXITY OF INDIA' S POLITICAL AND PUBLIC RELATIONS PROBLEMS IN CONNECTION WITH UGANDA ASIANS. BUT WHEN IT BECAME APPARENT TO SENIOR GOI OFFICIALS THAT PERUSASION WOULD NOT CARRY THE DAY, INDIANS ACTED FIRMLY. DECISION TO EMBARK ON POLITICALLY DISTASTEFUL STEP OF FORCIBLE EJECTION IS EVIDENCE THAT INDIA TAKES SERIOUSLY ITS OBLIGATIONS IN RESPECT TO THE SECURITY OF INTERNATIONAL AIR TRANSPORT, AND CONSTITUTES CLEAR WARNING THAT GOI WILL NOT TOLERATE INTERFERENCE WITH AIR TRAFFIC FOR POLITICAL PURPOSE.

5. IN COURSE OF GOI- UK- US DELIBERATIONS JUNE 24 ISSUE OF UGANDANS' ADMISSIBILITY IN INDIA CAME UNDER DISCUSSION. PANAM WAS TOLD THAT CERTIN OF UGANDANS WITHOUT VISAS WERE " TECHNICALLY" INADMISSIBLE, SHOULD HAVE NOT BEEN SOLD TICKETS, AND THAT AIRLINE COULD BE REQUIRED TO RETURN THEM TO POINT OF EMBARKATION , I. E. BANGKOK. MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS AFRICAN DIVISION OFFICIAL ADVISED PANAM " NOT TO TOUCH (UGANDA ASIANS) WITH A PAIR OF TONGS." WHILE THIS IS PROBABLY GOOD PRACTICAL ADVICE, AIRLINES ARE ENTITLED TO SELL TICKET TO ANY PROPERLY DOCUMENTED PASSENGER. DEPARTMENT MAY, HOWEVER, WISH TO INFORM US INTERNATIONAL CARRIERS OF DESIRABILITY OF CAREFUL INQUIRY INTO
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ADMISSIBILITY AT DESTINATION OF ASIAN UK PASSPORT HOLDERS BEFORE SELLING TICKETS.
SCHNEIDER

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<< END OF DOCUMENT >>

Message Attributes

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Draft Date: 25 JUN 1973
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Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: golinofr
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
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Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
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Errors: n/a
Film Number: n/a
From: NEW DELHI
Handling Restrictions: n/a
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ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t19730636/dccbkaao.tel
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TAGS: PFOR, IN, ETRN
To: STATE INFO BANGKOK
KAMPALA
LONDON
Type: TE
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